

**PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT  
EDF SITE, OFF STANLEY ROAD, SOUTH HARROW**

**DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT 6.10.06**

---

This design and access statement has been written following the guidance set out in CABE's publication "Design and Access Statements – How to write, read and use them".

## **THE PROCESS**

### **ASSESSMENT**

We aim in this section to demonstrate that we have studied the context of the site and its surroundings.

### **PHYSICAL CONTEXT**

#### **The Site**

The land is located to the north of the Biro Works site which is currently being developed by Barratt Homes to accommodate a scheme of high density flats. Thus, whilst the land immediately to the south of the application site is currently vacant, work is due to commence shortly implementing the recent planning approval.



The northern boundary abuts the rear of residential properties facing Roxeth Green Avenue. The eastern boundary abuts a Council owned day centre, and to the west an electricity sub-station separates the site from the proposed refurbished arches beneath the railway and the pedestrian promenade. The land is roughly square and predominantly level and is currently vacant overgrown scrubland.

#### **The Wider Area**

The application site is to the west of the District Centre on Northolt Road in South Harrow, within easy walking distance of South Harrow Tube Station and many bus routes on the A312 Northolt Road.

## **SOCIAL CONTEXT**

The land is hidden by surrounding buildings and thus the majority of local residents are unaware that the site exists. People in the wider locality are unlikely to be affected by the proposals as the quantum of development is relatively small in the overall urban context. The only potential impact will be on the immediate neighbours and these issues are dealt with later.

## **ECONOMIC CONTEXT**

The provision of much needed housing in a sustainable location will always benefit the local economy. In considering potential uses for the site the optimum value and best long term use for the site is likely to be achieved by residential development. Other potential uses were discounted due to the proximity of adjoining dwellings and the need to protect their amenity.

## **PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

### **UDP Designation**

The site is identified in the Harrow UDP 2004 as part of an Industrial and Business Use Area by virtue of its close proximity to other sites in that use. However, in pre-application discussions with the Council it has been agreed that, the principal of residential development has been established through the planning permission on the Biro House site.

Given that this land is undeveloped and vacant, there is no justification to apply any different consideration to its development for residential land. There is no need to justify its loss from employment uses, as it has never been in such a use.

### **Design and Layout**

Policy D4 of the UDP sets out a number of factors to be taken into account in the consideration of development proposals. These are considered in turn below.

#### ***a) Site and Setting***

The site lies between the vacant Biro House site to the south and the 2 storey houses in Roxeth Green Avenue to the north. It is also influenced by the sub-station to the west and the industrial buildings to the east.

The site is currently vacant scrubland. The proposed development will provide the opportunity to enhance the appearance of the site with carefully chosen and managed landscaping.

The proposed layout locates the building to ensure an acceptable relationship with the Roxeth Green Avenue houses and the future occupiers of the Biro House site. The application drawings clearly demonstrate the relationship between them and the landscaping and amenity space proposed.

### ***b) Context, Character and Scale***

This is considered in detail later in this statement to demonstrate that the proposal has been developed taking into account these factors.

The most important factor has been the relationship with the neighbouring properties, which has been a focus of the revisions made and has resulted in the layout of the site now proposed.

### ***c) Public Realm***

The only relationship this site has with the public realm is the pedestrian access along the side of the Biro House site to the pedestrian area in front of the arches. This footpath will be appropriately lit and landscaped to ensure an attractive route from the public area to the site.

### ***d) Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy, Sustainable Design and Construction***

This application is submitted with a supporting document prepared by ZED Homes, which explains how it is proposed to provide a high level of energy efficiency and on-site renewable energy production within the development. The principles of sustainable design and construction are also an integral part of the proposed development.

### ***e) Layout, Access and Movement***

The application is supported not only by the Access section of this report but also by a separate Transport Statement. These demonstrate full compliance with this policy objective.

### ***f) Safety***

This Design and Access Statement contains a section dealing specifically with crime prevention and safety to address this criterion.

### ***g) Landscape and Open Space***

These issues are dealt with later in this Statement.

### ***h) Adequate Refuse Storage***

A refuse storage enclosure is provided within the site to a size sufficient to serve the proposed development.

The aspirations of Policy D4 are fully satisfied by the proposed development.

## Amenity Space

Policy D5 requires amenity space that is sufficient to protect privacy and amenity and be usable and attractive. However, the UDP does not contain a specific amenity space standard for residential developments.

The layout of the proposed development has been designed to maximize the amount of usable amenity space whilst also providing an attractive landscaped setting for the building.

In comparison to the approved Barratt Homes development on the adjacent Biro House site, the amenity space provision is as follows:

Site	No. Units	Total Amenity Space	Amenity Space per unit
Biro House	180	1,640m <sup>2</sup>	9.1m <sup>2</sup>
EDF	12	180m <sup>2</sup>	15m <sup>2</sup>

The proposed usable amenity space is therefore significantly in excess of the amount provided for the Biro House scheme when assessed against the number of units. It should be noted that the calculation for the EDF site excludes the balconies that are to be provided for all of the first and second floor units.

In addition, we would draw your attention to a number of recent development schemes, which have been approved by Harrow Council with a relatively low level of amenity space provided on site. Some examples are provided below:

Site	No. Units	Comment
Enterprise House, 15 St John's Road, Harrow	14 flats	Little communal amenity space. Reliance on balconies
View Point Court, 1 Pinner Green, Pinner	22 flats	Rear garden area provided. Appeal Inspector concluded that not all occupiers would expect amenity space and the amount provided was acceptable
29-33 Pinner Road, Harrow	34 Flats	Small communal garden acceptable due to location of site
Raebarn House, Northolt Road, South Harrow	150 flats	Small courtyard and roof terrace. Mainly reliance on balconies

## **Residential Amenity**

Policy D5 also requires an adequate separation distance between buildings and site boundaries to protect the amenity of adjoining occupiers. Again, no specific standard is set.

As is explained under design considerations later in this statement, the proposed development has been carefully designed to respect the amenities of neighbouring properties and provide a safe and attractive environment for future occupiers.

The application drawings demonstrate how the proposal will relate to the adjacent Biro House scheme and neighbouring properties in terms of levels and landscaping. The building will be sited quite close to the adjacent industrial site, following the pattern of the approved Biro House scheme.

The building will be set at an oblique angle to the houses in Roxeth Green Avenue and will not have any directly facing habitable room windows. The distance between those houses and the proposed flats will be a minimum of 25m.

It has been agreed in pre-application advice from planning officers that this relationship in terms of privacy and the physical relationship between the buildings is acceptable.

A major concern of officers in pre-application discussions was the proximity of the proposed car parking to the boundary with the houses in Roxeth Green Avenue and the potential for landscaping.

In response to this the car parking spaces have been relocated away from this boundary and the turning area has been reduced in size as far as possible. This has enabled the provision of a landscaping strip up to 4m deep at the most sensitive point.

If necessary, in addition to landscaping, we can discuss whether some form of boundary treatment would be appropriate to provide an additional level of screening between the two properties.

## **Car Parking & Access**

Policy T13 and Schedule 5 of the UDP set a maximum parking standard of 1.4 car parking spaces per 2 bed unit and seek provision of secure, enclosed provision for cycle parking.

The car parking provision at one space per unit, with secure bicycle storage also provided, is the same as the parking levels for the Biro House site and significantly greater than some other recently approved developments in the area such as the Raebarn House development.

The Transport Statement accompanying this application demonstrates that the level of car parking proposed and the access provision satisfies the relevant

requirements. Given the size of the development in relation to the approved Biro House scheme the additional impact will not be material.

### **Affordable Housing**

Policy H5 of the UDP seeks the provision of affordable housing on sites of 0.5 hectares or more or developments of 15 units or more. The issue was raised in pre-application discussions as to whether this development should be treated as an extension of the Biro House development for the purposes of paragraph 6.32 of the UDP, which seeks to prevent sub-division of sites to avoid exceeding such policy thresholds.

The applicant's response and that time and now is that this site is, and always has been, in a separate ownership to the Biro House site. The land has only become available for development following the approval of the Biro House scheme, which opens up this site which was previously landlocked.

Part of the land adjacent to the sub-station is being retained for potential future use by EDF, the electricity company. The remainder has now been released for development.

We do not believe it is necessary or appropriate for this site to make provision for affordable housing as it is not related to the development of the Biro House site other than utilising the access road. The twelve units are therefore proposed as wholly private.

The proposed development has been significantly amended as a result of pre-application discussions with the Council and fully satisfies all the requirements of the UDP.

### **INVOLVEMENT**

As the site is relatively small and completely enclosed, it was not considered appropriate to undertake any pre-application public consultation. The planning process advertises the scheme, and neighbours affected by the proposals will be notified of the application. There is a process through which they can comment on the proposals and any concerns they may have will be taken into account when the committee determines the application.

In any event, the local population will have been made aware of the potential for future development of this land, as it was shown indicatively on the Barratt Homes proposals.

### **EVALUATION**

The options for redevelopment were identified by evaluating the site's context and stakeholders' views. Constraints and opportunities were identified as follows and these informed the design:-

## Constraints

- Residential properties exist very close to the northern boundary and the outlook from these existing dwellings will need to be carefully considered.
- The sub-station site to the west is not particularly attractive and will need to be screened if possible.
- The access position has been determined by the previous approval of the adjoining site and needs to be considered in the layout.
- The height of the proposed buildings should respect both the adjoining properties to the north and the new development to the south.

## Opportunities

- There is an opportunity to provide much needed residential accommodation on this redundant land.
- There is an opportunity to link the new scheme to the pedestrian promenade and refurbished railway arches via a new pedestrian link, thus enhancing the vitality of this area.
- There is an opportunity to design a scheme that compliments the layout and aesthetics of the approved Biro House project and helps to enclose the northern courtyard of the adjoining scheme.
- To provide usable amenity space around the new building in an attractive landscaped setting.
- To provide a landscaping scheme which enhances the local ecology.

## **DESIGN**

The design has been carefully considered to respect the various constraints and to maximize the identified opportunities.

### Enclosure

We considered it was important to form an 'L' shaped structure to visually enclose the northern courtyard of the approved Biro House scheme and provide screening of the industrial estate to the north east.

### Relationship to Adjoining Properties

We have attempted to maximize the distance between the proposed structures and adjoining residential properties to the north, and have carefully designed the dwellings to minimise overlooking. The main aspect of the closest dwellings face south towards the Biro House courtyard, ensuring that only secondary windows face this boundary at a significant oblique angle. A wide landscape buffer zone is provided along the northern boundary together with new trees to screen the proposed development.

## **USE**

The proposed scheme shows a residential development. During the design evaluation stage we considered all other potential uses for the land and focused on residential as the most appropriate solution. The secluded nature of the site and its proximity to other residential dwellings precluded any commercial, retail or business use, and the lack of easy public access precluded any community uses. It was thus concluded that residential would be the most appropriate way forwards.

## **AMOUNT AND SCALE**

In assessing the quantum of development, we took into account the proximity of the dwellings to the north and the height of the recently approved scheme to the south. A natural transition between the two-storey housing and the new flatted development to the south, which is five storeys on top of the car parking deck at the closest point (i.e. equivalent to six storeys) suggested that a four-storey structure would appropriately bridge the transition. In assessing the impact on the properties to the north, it was felt that the four-storey building, when viewed from the rear of the properties would appear to be no higher than the six storey structure behind. Three flats per floor could comfortably be accommodated whilst retaining an appropriate amount of amenity, a turning facility, and car parking.

## **LANDSCAPING**

A Landscaping Architect will be appointed to design the landscaping in detail, when planning approval is granted. Each space will be designed to maximize its amenity value for future residents' use and the perimeter treatments will be carefully designed to maximize screening.

## **APPEARANCE**

The elevational treatment and materials are intended to compliment the approved project to the south whilst not copying it exactly.

## **ACCESS**

### **Highways Access**

An access road has been designed as part of the Biro House development with the intention of serving this site to enable its future development by another developer. Vehicular access is from Stanley Road via the new roads constructed through the Biro House site. As we are keen to maximize pedestrian movement in this area, access will be predominantly from the new promenade adjacent to the railway arches. A landscaped footpath will be provided along the northern boundary of the Biro House site.

## Car Parking

One space per dwelling is provided in view of the site's highly sustainable location. Cycle storage is also provided in a free-standing enclosure adjacent to the car park.

## **CRIME PREVENTION**

PPS1 makes clear that a key objective for new development should be that they create safe and accessible environments. To respond to this objective we have attempted to design the scheme incorporating the principles set out in "*Safer Places – The Planning System and Crime Prevention*" (ODPM Home Office 2003), and Secured by Design publications.

- Access and Movement  
A single point of vehicular access is designed to the site which passes through the Biro House scheme to the south, thus psychologically anyone visiting the site by car will be very conspicuous. As there is only one route of exit, thieves would feel very uncomfortable entering and exiting the scheme. Similarly, the pedestrian access has good natural surveillance from the flats adjacent and will be well lit and clearly marked. On entering the site by foot the main entrance is clearly visible across the landscaped courtyard. Residents or visitors parking at the rear of the site can use the rear entrance to the flats, which again is clearly visible. All parking areas and pedestrian routes will be well lit and clearly defined.
- Structure  
A good hierarchy of spaces has been achieved with railings and fences enclosing the amenity areas and ensuring that there is clear separation between the public realm, defensible space, and private amenity areas.
- Surveillance  
All areas benefit from natural surveillance.
- Ownership  
Each area of landscaping has been designed to increase the sense of ownership by residents and to maximize potential uses adjacent to dwellings.
- Physical Protection  
Boundary treatments have been carefully designed to provide the right level of physical protection whilst maintaining views through where required. Accessible doors and windows will be to Secured by Design standards, including PAS23, PAS24 and BS7950. Glass to accessible doors and windows will be laminated.

- Management and Maintenance

A management company will be established to ensure that the landscaping and parking areas are maintained to a high standard. The buildings will also be regularly re-decorated and maintained to ensure a consistent appearance.

- Disabled Access

The footpath serving the development will be a level approach (maximum gradient 1:20) and will be of adequate width for wheelchair use (minimum 1200mm). A disabled parking space is provided and all stairs within the dwellings will be ambulant staircases. The dwellings will incorporate many of the principles of Lifetime Homes.